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## ARE PUBLIC UTILITY COMMISSIONS REALLY BENEFICIAL AND NECESSARY?

SENATOR SEEGMILLER OF THIS DISTRICT SAYS YES

The Senator Says He Has Been Converted to the Necessity of a Commission, and Asks Mr. Peet to Explain His Interest in Opposing Measure.

(Kane County News.)

In the Iron County Record of May 5, appears an article by V. S. Peet, under the caption, "As To Public Service Commissions."

The argument therein used is so illogical that it is hardly worth space for any reply or comment from anyone whose name is therein mentioned. But since Mr. Peet takes occasion to say that I voted against the Public Utilities Bill in the last legislature, I consider that I should make my position clearly understood before my constituents.

I voted against the measure, first of all, because I was not thoroughly converted to the merits of the bill as it was presented before the Senate. Secondly, because it appeared to me that it was a simple quarrel between the Orem and the D. & R. G. railroads, and the whole argument seemed to be based upon the question, whether or not the D. & R. G. should unload coal at Provo to the Orem Railroad, which it wished to distribute between Provo and Salt Lake City. Since then, the two railroads have become reconciled, and the Orem Railroad, which was the force behind the Public Utilities bill in the last legislature, is at this time rather indifferent to the proposition of public utilities legislation.

Further than this, I have learned some things in the last two years; and I hope to be able to learn a few things in the next two years. Through studying the question of the public utilities commission, and watching what has happened between the public and some utilities, I have become thoroughly converted to the need of a public utilities commission in this state.

Mr. Peet states that Salt Lake County, in its recent trouble with the Mountain States Telegraph and Telephone Company has proved beyond question that a public utilities commission is unnecessary. Will Mr. Peet or anybody else argue that the best way for people to settle differences between themselves and the telephone company is for the people to be compelled to hold indignation meetings, to cut their wires and throw their phones in the street, to hang phones by the dozens on telegraph poles; and thereby injure and damage the telephone system and all the citizens who are compelled to use it, to such an extent that finally the telephone company is compelled to give just and adequate service?

Mr. Peet also states that the thing a public utility most dreads is competition by the public. Does he mean that every time we are mistreated by a public utility that the people must construct or threaten to construct a service? One would judge from the reading of the article by Mr. Peet that the author considers that a public utility commission would be an enemy to the public utility companies. That it would only be meant to make corporations bend the knee. But the fact is that the commission would of necessity be an unbiased state commission appointed to adjust differences between the public and the servants, and that it would be the duty of the commission to protect the public utility just as much as it would be the duty of the commission to protect the public.

The point Mr. Peet makes on the commission being treated to American Beauty and Sunnybrook ponies and Royal Havana fillies, and all such tommyrot argument, will not weigh very heavily with the thinking citizen. Does Mr. Peet imagine for a minute that the last legislature was not wined and dined and given joy rides and theatre tickets, and all this sort of thing, and would that be an argument for the abolition of the state legislature? And has he forgotten that the legislature with an overwhelming vote passed a prohibition bill directly in opposition to the wishes of the people who were paying the expenses of the wining and dining and the joyrides and theatre tickets? And to say that we cannot have a public utilities commission that would live above such petty bribery would be to put an exceedingly small measure upon mankind of Utah. He mentions the expense of the thing. I don't suppose he has ever investigated the expense of the political machines we already have. Without quoting figures, I invite your attention to the expense of our state government, and ask you to look in the session laws of the last legislature and see what the Governor's office alone is costing us. Compare it with our expense of only a few years ago in the Governor's office, and then compare Utah's expense for administration with other states of her population and assessed valuation; and I am sure that you will agree with me that we could very wisely reduce these expenses to a sufficient amount.

(Continued on column 4.)

S. V. PEET OF SALT LAKE TAKES A NEGATIVE VIEW

Mr. Peet Replies to Mr. Woodbury, Giving Additional Reasons Why He Is Opposed to a Public Utility Commission for the State of Utah.

Editor Iron County Record.—I am very glad that Mr. Woodbury attempted to answer my article on a Public Utilities Commission, because the more the people are enlightened on the subject, the less will be their desire for one. Mr. Woodbury says:

"First let me remark that Iron County has ten privately owned public utilities, all working harmoniously between themselves and their patrons at the present time."

If the above is true, why a Public Utility Commission for Iron County? Why make an expense trying to cross a bridge before you get to it?

Mr. Woodbury further stated: "Two months ago peace and quiet reigned in the telephone field of Salt Lake County, just as in Iron County. Suddenly an incident occurred, a rate adjustment, that set the people on fire; and Mr. Peet tells us that at the mass meeting held in Murray and attended by representatives of the telephone company, 'diplomacy and argument were thrown to the winds.' Note his words."

Mr. Woodbury, why did you not finish that sentence if you wished to be fair? It is as follows: "The people said, 'we want two dollars flat rates per month for service and free service to Salt Lake City.' No arguments or diplomacy were necessary, and the people got JUST WHAT THEY DEMANDED."

Mr. Woodbury compares a Public Utility Commission to our Supreme Court and County Commissioners. Our State Supreme Court and our County Commissioners are elected by the people and are beholden to the people for their conduct; while a Utility Commission is a political appointment, and if the history of the past is a guide to the future our Supreme Courts are usually fair and upright, while Public Utility Commissions are a species of political machinery working for the party that appointed them. Mr. Woodbury undoubtedly does not know of the far reaching and political effect of a Public Utility Commission. The Evans bill on Public Utilities that was defeated in our last Legislature was copied, as Mr. Evans its author said, from the best bills that have been passed by other states. It was Senate Bill No. 4. It was so far reaching that it makes the Governor of this state an absolute monarch over our railroads, telephones, electric lights and all other public utilities. It gives the Governor power to appoint three men who can favor or break any public utility within our borders. It not only reaches utility corporations but, in article 2, page 9, it "includes any and all service in connection with the transportation of property, baggage, freight and passengers," whether individuals or corporations.

In article 3, "The Commission shall have administrative power and authority, as provided in this act, to supervise and regulate all public utilities doing business within this state." It not only has power to regulate but it can make the "fares, tolls, charges and services" of all public utilities. It can compel any railroad to build depots, put in switches, and put on or take off trains. It can prescribe how a railroad or any other public utility can keep its books, accounts, and records, and classify them as it sees fit. In section 18, page 18, "The Commission or any employees thereof, upon the authority of the commission, shall at any time have the right to inspect or examine any and all accounts, records, and memoranda kept by any public utility." It can compel any public utility to make them maps, reports, records, documents, and information to suit their whim.

Section 26, page 21. "It can withhold from the public any facts or information in its possession."

Section 10, page 29. "The railroads cannot change any timetable or rate of passenger fare or freight tariff without the consent of the Commission."

Section 11, page 30. "The Commission can compel a public utility to divulge any and all contracts, agreements with other corporations, individuals or companies."

In section 16, page 31. "The Commission can compel a street car company to issue transfers, regulate its time schedule, and where the transfer shall be made."

Section 1, page 53. "Every public utility, and all officers, agents and employees of any public utility, shall obey, observe and comply with every order, rule, direction or requirement made by the Commission." Those who do not will be guilty of a misdemeanor.

And, in fact, should the Evans bill have become a law, the railroads and other public utilities would have no rights that a utility commission would

## HARK! LISTEN!

The Mountains are Calling You

Summer is nigh and you will want a trip or two into the canyon and mountains. A little effort will make a good road up Coal Creek Canyon. Some of the most beautiful scenery in the world can be reached within an hour or two from Cedar City. Why not make Cedar City the Hub of Southern Utah—the center of a large tourist business?

In addition to this, the making of a good road up our canyon will open for our use more than 20,000,000 feet of choice saw timber, sufficient to supply the local markets with native lumber for centuries to come. All that we need is a good safe, practical road to haul it over.

Besides this there is the coal traffic, the dairy and ranch business, both of which are important arms of industry to this section, and all of which will be vastly benefitted by the construction of this road.

The Mayor has declared next Wednesday a holiday and would like every available man and boy with pick, shovel or team to work on the Canyon road that day.

The good roads movement is becoming popular everywhere. The cities in the northern part of the State have already set apart a number of days for the improvement of roads. Let us not be behind the procession. A little help from each of us will make a great improvement in our roads, and everybody will be benefitted thereby.

It is expected that the ladies of the community will provide and serve an appetizing lunch to the men and boys participating in the work on the road, and it is expected that the occasion will be pleasurable, as well as profitable.

Remember the day and date—next Wednesday, June 14.

For further information consult the Committee:

JOSEPH S. FIFE,  
E. H. MACFARLANE,  
SOLON J. FOSTER.

be bound to respect.

Now, does Mr. Woodbury desire to have such a piece of political power over the "Ten privately owned public utilities in Iron County, all working harmoniously between themselves and their patrons." Salt Lake County has solved the problem. The County Commissioners in their last ordinance on the telephone situation provide as follows:

A portion of section 111: "Nothing in this section contained shall prevent the board of county commissioners from approving or fixing the rates, tolls, rentals or charges, from time to time, in excess or less than those shown by said schedules."

Sec. IV. Unless the board of county commissioners otherwise orders, no change shall be made by any telephone company in any rate, toll, rental, charge or classification, or in any rule, regulation or contract relating to or affecting any rate, toll, charge, classification or service, or in any privilege or facility.

What more can Salt Lake County ask and what more does Iron County need—and this without the expense of a utility commission? Mr. Woodbury further states:

"Many of our utilities are inter-county in their operation and could be better handled by a state than by a county commission."

I will go further and say that most of utilities are inter-state, and could be better handled by the United States Interstate Commerce Commission. I am very glad to quote Mr. Woodbury again as follows:

"Since its organization the commission has been a source of net revenue to the state. The receipts of the State Public Utilities Commission of Illinois from January 1, 1914, the date of its beginning, to February 29, 1916, a period of 26 months, amounted to \$335,690.69 the grand total of expenditures for the same period amounted to \$514,132.82. This leaves \$321,558.87, which has been paid into the state treasury through the commission, over and above all expenses."

This shows that Illinois Commission cost over \$257,000 per year. Now, Mr. Woodbury, who pays it if not the people? All corporations base their charges on the cost of operation. Who pays the 1c. revenue on a telegram? The telegraph company? Not one bit of it. It is added to the cost of the dispatch.

In the case of the Illinois Commission, what an opportunity for graft and hold-up when three men can mulch from public utilities over \$417,000 in one year, and no one but the commissioners know how much more. I hope Mr. Woodbury will attempt to answer this, as there is so much more on the subject that the people should know.

Yours truly,  
V. S. PEET.  
Salt Lake City, May 22, 1916.

(Continued from column 1.)  
to provide the expense of a public utilities commission, without increasing our burden of taxation, to say nothing of what the public utilities commission might save the public in reduction and control of rates and charges. It would not be extravagant at all to say that the commission could save to the people the amount of its running expenses. In closing, I wish to say that I have become converted to a public utilities commission, and I hope always to be liberal minded enough to accept the right when it has been shown and can be understood.  
I should like, also, to ask Mr. Peet why he is so actively opposing a public utilities commission. Is it because of his great interest in their welfare? or could it be possible that he is employed by some corporation? I remember very distinctly that he spent many days and weeks in the last legislature lobbying against the public utilities bill. Was this simply because without remuneration he was willing to work for the best interests of the people, or was he employed by somebody to do what he could against the bill? Naturally, we look to the motive, and if Mr. Peet would, he could easily set our minds at rest on this point.  
W. W. SEEGMILLER.

BASE BALL GAME TOMORROW. PAROWAN VS. CEDAR CITY.

On Saturday afternoon at 2:30 o'clock, the Parowan and Cedar City base ball teams will clash again on the local diamond.

The boys have been working hard to give Cedar City a creditable team this year. They have done their part and are depending upon the town to support them.

They have done their part the year if the town does not rally to the support of the team.

Admission: Adults 25c., children 10c.

## COMMISSIONERS REGULAR SESSION

Met Last Monday and Disposed of Regular Budget Before Meeting as a—

BOARD OF EQUALIZATION TO ADJUST ASSESSMENTS

Have Been Kept Busy Considerable Portion of the Week in This Latter Capacity.

The regular meeting of the board of County Commissioners was held Monday evening in the court house, Chairman Henry W. Lunt, Commissioners Knell and Evans, Attorney J. H. Fife, and Clerk Mitchell were present. The following business was transacted:

Mr. Edwards and Wm. P. Barton, members of the Paragonah town board, petitioned the commissioners for the sum of \$80, which was paid to the county some twenty years ago from a sale of town lots in Paragonah. The sale was made during the time that Daniel Page was Probate Judge. The petitioners were of the opinion that the amount was still in the treasury, and they desired to use it in the improvement of sidewalks and streets if it were obtainable. Mr. Barton also asked for the privilege of using the Paragonah poll tax for 1916 on the streets of their town. The matter was referred to the county attorney, with instructions to report on the same at the next meeting of the county commissioners.

It was reported that the road which had been designated as a county road from Paragonah along section line to intersect with the road leading to the Parowan Gap had been fenced, with gates for teams passing through. The citizens who made the report asked that the fence be removed, as the road would be used to reach the Parowan-Lund road. This matter was referred to Commissioner Evans and the road supervisor, who were to make an investigation and report at next meeting.

Commissioner Lunt reported that Mrs. Jane Pryor of Cedar City had been allowed a remittance of taxes in 1914, but for some reason did not get the benefit of it, and being unable to raise the full amount of her tax, the property was sold. Mr. Lunt recommended that an appropriation be made sufficient to redeem the property. Commissioner Evans made a motion to this effect, and same was carried.

A communication from the State Road Commission suggesting that \$25,000.00 be set aside for road purposes by Iron County, to insure the state expending \$5,000 on roads in this county, was read, arguments were made pro and con, and finally a motion was made and carried to set the matter aside.

A delegate to attend the State Road convention was talked of, but no action was taken in the matter.

Mr. Lunt read a letter from the Secretary of State in regard to uncollected automobile taxes, Iron county appearing to be about the only county in the state in arrears on this matter. It was decided to instruct the sheriff and road commissioner to inform all auto owners to secure a license at once.

Many of the tax payers of this county have failed to pay their taxes for the past year, so the treasurer was instructed to collect same by law. In the event that a seizure of property be necessary, the sheriff was instructed to assist the treasurer.

Scott Mitchell, agent for the Maxwell car, disposed of one a few days ago to George Rasmussen.

Mining location notices are still pouring into the county recorder's office. The fees for the office for the month of May were the largest by far that have ever been turned to the treasurer through the recorder's office.

PAROWAN NOTES

Mrs. E. A. Burton and two little sons, Mrs. Sarah Orton, Enoch and Joseph Rasmussen, are visitors in Salt Lake City this week.

Mr. O'Neil and S. A. Higbee of Cedar City are in Parowan canyon working on their potash claims. It is their intention to drive a tunnel in the potash formation to get some samples for assay purposes.

The stork visited the home of Geo. Kowley June 6th, leaving a baby boy

## LANDS ELIMINATED FROM DIXIE FOREST

Large Area in Arizona Held to be Improperly Designated, Returns to Public Domain.

On May 10 the President signed a proclamation, the effect of which is to exclude from the Dixie National Forest situated in Arizona and Utah, over one-half of the lands embraced therein. The eliminations, which total 638,520 acres, are all made from the two Arizona divisions of this forest. The area known as the Parashont division, consisting of a block of land approximately 25 miles square, bordering the Grand Canyon of the Colorado River, is abolished, and this entire area restored to the public domain. The other Arizona division of the forest, known as the Mt. Trombull division, and also partly bounded by the Grand Canyon, has been greatly reduced, all but about 28 sections being eliminated. The lands retained in this division, as a part of the forest, comprise the well on which are situated a number of small sawmills.

The result of the large elimination is to restore to the public domain a considerable area which the forest service has for some time felt could not properly be retained as part of a national forest, since the lands affected were found to have little or no value for timber or watershed purposes, but to be really valuable only for stock grazing.

The proposal to make this elimination was opposed by the majority of the users, who desired to have the lands remain within the forest in order that their cattle might graze under government regulation. Because of the manifest non-forest character of the area, the Secretary of Agriculture determined to recommend its release from national forest reservation. The Utah division of the Dixie, situated north of St. George, is not affected by the present proclamation. Two small areas of national forest lands in southern Nevada, in the vicinity of Las Vegas, known as the Moapa division, and formerly a part of the Toiyabe forest, are transferred to the Dixie forest by this same proclamation. This action is taken purely because of administrative requirements, since it is found that these areas could be more properly and more economically supervised by the forest supervisor at St. George, Utah, than from the Toiyabe headquarters at Austin, Nevada.

Parowan Dramatic Poorly Patronized.

"Young Mrs. Windthrop," the play presented by the Parowan Dramatic company at the Ward Hall last Tuesday night, was very poorly attended, the receipts being entirely insufficient to defray the expenses of making the trip.

The play, nevertheless, was a very good one and presented in first-class shape. There were really no poor characters on the cast, and the production would compare favorably with any that are given by traveling companies making this district of country. It deserved better patronage.

We are informed that the young people spent a month or more on the production, and gave it as a ward and stake benefit for the Primary organization. Naturally they felt disappointed and crestfallen that their efforts should have been so poorly appreciated here.

Among the leading characters were Will L. Adams, who starred the performance; Mrs. Eleanor Burhn, Miss Pearl Rose, Miss Miriam Burton, Taylor Miller, Winston Orton, and others.

We presume that the season of the year had much to do with the slim attendance, which, none the less, we sincerely regret.

Leigh-Burby Wedding.

It was somewhat of a surprise to many of their friends when it was learned last week that Mr. Trehame Leigh and Miss Cathrine Burby, who had been keeping company for several months, had gone to Salt Lake with the intention of being married. The ceremony that made them man and wife was performed in Salt Lake City, and they returned home the first of this week, appy as birds in the spring time.

Trehame is a son of Daniel T. Leigh of this city, and is highly respected in the community. He performed a mission a few years ago, and has since been connected with the Mutual Improvement work in this stake.

Miss Burby was a teacher in the public schools of this place the past winter. Her home is in Wisconsin, but she has become well known and universally liked here. The Record wishes the young people a long and smooth voyage on the sea of matrimony.

Dr. Macfarlane was called to Enterprise a few days ago to see a patient, whom he found to be in a serious condition that he took her into Salt Lake City to receive attention. The doctor has not yet returned, and particulars are lacking.

and the mother and child are reported to be doing nicely. Mr. Rowley is not at home, being engaged in work upon the road.

John T. Mitchell has sufficiently recovered from his injuries to be able to leave his room and is improving slowly but surely.